



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
REPUBLICANS | Frank Lucas, Ranking Member

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Contact [Heather Vaughan](#)
202-225-6371

Opening Statement of Ranking Member Frank Lucas
Space Subcommittee Hearing on NASA's Deep Space Exploration Plans

(Washington, DC) – At today's House Science, Space, and Technology Subcommittee on Space [hearing on NASA's Deep Space Exploration Plans](#), Ranking Member Frank Lucas discussed the importance of human space exploration. "We can no longer take America's preeminence in space for granted," Lucas said. "Other nations are also have exploration plans. Urgency is now required to maintain our leadership."

[Lucas' full statement follows:](#)

Two days ago, I toured the Goddard Spaceflight Center with Chairwoman Johnson, Administrator Bridenstine, and Director Scolese. The enthusiasm and focus of the NASA family is contagious. As I said at our last hearing, our Nation's space program is a source of pride. It exemplifies the greatest aspects of our country: the pursuit of knowledge; heroism; technical excellence; perseverance; and the intrepid spirit to chart a course into the unknown. Exploration is in our DNA, and no other nation embraces that gift more than the United States.

NASA, and this Administration, are harnessing that gift and focusing our efforts to pioneer space. By continuing the investments made over the last two decades, we are progressing towards our national goal to send Americans to the Moon, Mars, and beyond.

The Vice President challenged the Nation to return astronauts to the Moon by 2024. It's an exciting and ambitious goal that will ultimately establish a long-term presence on the Moon, allowing us to explore its resources and conduct pioneering scientific research. I look forward to reviewing a proposal to achieve that goal. NASA, the Administration, Congress, the private sector, and ultimately the American people, all have a role to play in making that happen.

As we move forward, we would all benefit from remembering the lessons of previous proposals. The transition from Apollo to Shuttle, Space Station Freedom, the proposal to cancel the International Space Station program, the Space Exploration Initiative, the Vision for Space Exploration, the Constellation Cancellation, and the Asteroid Retrieval Mission, all provide unique lessons.

We should also realize that we can no longer take America's preeminence in space for granted. Other nations are also have exploration plans. Urgency is now required to maintain our leadership.

NASA must provide a detailed plan for this next phase of exploration. The Administration and OMB must provide a realistic funding proposal. And Congress must approve and appropriately fund the plan. This is not impossible, but it will require tough decisions. As Americans, we are up to that challenge.

I'd like to now ask the staff to play a [brief video](#) for my remaining time, which captures the vision and work ahead for NASA.

Thank you.

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